



ARIZONA FIRE SERVICES INSTITUTE

January 9, 2020

*In Coordination
With:*

Professional
Fire Fighters of
Arizona

Metro Section Of
The Arizona Fire
Chiefs Association

Arizona Fire Chiefs
Association

Arizona Fire
District Association

Volunteer Fire
Fighters of Arizona

To whom it may concern:

The Arizona Fire Services Institute (AFSI) represents all aspects of the Arizona fire service from firefighters to fire chiefs in municipalities, fire districts and rural volunteer departments. The AFSI are strong advocates of educational opportunities as membership advances throughout their careers. Each Fire Service agency across the State offers a variety of opportunities that allow their members to achieve higher education with assistance from either the agency itself, or on their own.

We strongly believe that requiring an undergraduate degree for paramedic certification is unsustainable. As emergency providers our members are required to demonstrate expertise regarding life saving techniques, patient care, and emergency situations. There is no supporting evidence that indicates someone would be a better paramedic simply because they earned an undergraduate degree. This unfunded mandate is not a sustainable requirement and may cause several Departments across the state to reduce the number of paramedic services or eliminate the service completely. Many rural communities already struggle to fund paramedic certification today. We support programs that offer the opportunity to earn an undergraduate degree as part of their program, but do not support the concept as a directive or unfunded mandate.

Within the NEMSAC charter it states *"The Council's broad-based membership will ensure that it has sufficient EMS system expertise and geographic and demographic diversity to accurately reflect the EMS community as a whole. Members will be selected for their ability to represent sectors of the EMS community, but no member will represent a specific organization."*

Which would suggest that the board members are required to embody their representative sectors posture on topics or suggestions for the future of EMS, to prevent a specific organization or an individual person dictating what is best for our future.

This suggested change for the future of paramedicine is unnecessary, costly and unproven and is not supported by the Fire Service Associations in Arizona.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randy Karrer'.

Randy Karrer
Chairman/Facilitator
Arizona Fire Services Institute